

News from the Dean of Students

Dear West Catholic Community,

Welcome to the 2021-2022 school year! On behalf of West Catholic teachers and staff, we are absolutely thrilled to be back in school this year with some sense of normalcy. Although our journey through the pandemic continues, we are blessed to be able to partner with you in supporting the growth and development of your children.

At West Catholic, our mission is to build disciples of Christ through a dynamic, excellence-driven, Catholic education. As you know, we are dedicated to providing the best possible education for your students, which means we are always looking for ways to grow and improve. This year, we made a few alterations to our policies and procedures that are designed to provide greater support for our students and help make the school day more conducive to learning.

Please review the descriptions below that highlight some of the updates to our handbook and important informational items for the start the school year:

Lockers

One of the major changes in our school day is designed to help students to utilize their lockers. Many times students would elect to place their backpacks in hallways or in common areas rather than in their lockers, which is an issue both for school safety and is not aesthetically pleasing. After listening to student frustrations and issues regarding their locks malfunctioning, along with the time it takes in between classes, we have elected to remove locks from all school-assigned lockers to make locker usage more convenient and faster for students. We have cameras installed along the hallways and students found entering a locker that is not their own will be punished as noted in the student handbook.

Lunch/Food Delivery

Any student not ordering hot lunch must bring lunch from home or it must be delivered from a parent/guardian. Utilizing food delivery services (Uber Eats, GrubHub, DoorDash, Postmates, etc) to deliver food during the school day is prohibited from the hours of 8am to 3pm.

Orientation Expectations

On August 25th, at 8am, the entire school will gather in the Main Gym. Please see the Orientation document in the back to school information for details. All students must be in proper school uniform for the entire day. Any student out of dress code will receive detention and may not get their school picture taken.

Dress Code

All shorts and skirts must be no shorter than two inches above the kneecap. Rolling shorts or skirts is not allowed.

Since the summer is typically a time for male students to grow out their hair and facial hair, we wanted to send a quick reminder that come August 25th, hair must not cover the eyes or touch the collar of any male student. Gentlemen must also be clean shaven. New this year: if a student comes to school with facial hair and is told to shave he must purchase a razor from the main office for \$2 and will receive a detention.

Please take care of these dress code issues before the start of school to avoid detention and to be able to participate in school pictures.

Uniforms

Please contact the office if your uniforms have not arrived from Flynn O'Hara.

Academic Procedure Adaptations

Weekly Missing Assignment Reports: Teaching students both virtually and in person poses a new challenge for teachers to ensure that all students are staying on track academically. This issue has provided us the opportunity to evaluate our current method of monitoring student performance and identify ways to better assist all students in keeping up in their course work whether virtual, or in person. Beginning in August, we will run weekly missing assignment reports for all students in order to try to make sure that all students receive the support they need more frequently. Our hope is that these reports will allow us to intervene more quickly, alleviate some stress on students, and support your child as they adjust to the current format of a school day. Each Tuesday, we will run a missing assignment report looking for students with accumulating missing assignments. We will meet with students who have 3 or more and give them until Friday morning at 8am to have fewer than 3 outstanding assignments. If a student has 3 or more outstanding assignments at that 8am check, they will lose eligibility for extracurriculars for the upcoming week and be locked into pomodoro on Monday and Wednesday of the following week to complete the work they owe and receive support.

Extracurricular Participation Updates

Participation Policy: Any student who wishes to participate in extracurricular activities must plan on attending school in person each day, for the entire day. Extracurricular activities are a privilege for students who are in good standing academically. Safety protocol and procedures for extracurriculars are very similar to the school day requirements. Students arriving to school late will be ineligible for participation in extracurriculars unless the reason for the absence is a doctor's appointment - verified with a note from the doctor's office. Any other exception must be approved by the administration ahead of time.

Thank you so much for your partnership and for trusting us to continue to form children into Disciples of Christ. We look forward to a great year and cannot wait to see everyone back on campus!

If you have any questions or concerns regarding policy, procedures, or school rules, please feel free to contact the main office.

God Bless,

Joe Gietzen | Dean of Students

joegietzen@grwestcatholic.org

616-233-5929